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Bra-Burners and Lesbians

As a child I grew up with three major women in my life; my mother Jenny, my Grandma Laura and my Grandma Bonnie, all fantastic women who have molded me to be the feminist I am. From these women I learned the truth behind feminism, that it is not necessarily about ‘girl power’ but how men and women are equal. Since my parents had split, it was always my mom and I and she made sure to take care of my every need, working hard for all my wants and necessities. When I would go to see my dad-who lived with my Grandma Bonnie- his mother took care of me making all my meals, giving me my baths and putting me to sleep at night. When my mother was busy at work I went to her moms, my Grandma Laura who did the same. The difference between these three women is simple; my mom did it all by herself, my Grandma Bonnie did it while taking care of my alcoholic grandpa, and my Grandma Laura had the help of her husband my Pampa. These women influenced me greatly, and at a young age I quickly learned what it means to be a feminist; regardless of a women’s situation they have the power to make everything work out, even without the help of significant other, but it is okay to accept help.

Anna Terri at the Young Women’s Resource Center defined feminism is “equal right for women that are given to men”. In technical and logical terms this would be a perfect definition, however in my opinion a true feminist stands up for those rights.I am blessed for the women in America’s history who have fought for the rights I am given today such as voting and no discrimination against sex in hiring. For instance, Gloria Steinem who is a co-founder in Ms. Magazine has advocated for women’s rights almost for years and is still working at it. She worked on legalizing abortion and is still working on same sex marriage. A woman that worked along her side was Louise Noun who founded organizations such as the Young Women’s Resource Centers and the Chrysalis Foundation. The Chrysalis Foundation helped women greatly and gave help to people in domestic abuse along with giving funding to day cares and financial aid to women in community colleges. The foundation sponsored “Women’s Voices” which was a conference where a bunch of girls got together and discussed women’s rights socially and politicallyFor about 40 years women fought for women’s suffrage and the right to vote in the 19th amendment, it did not even pass until 1920. It took women 40 entire years to earn the right to vote. Black men who were slaves had the right to vote before women. That is how hard women had to work in order to be recognized as even somewhat equal in society. I am in a group that promotes pregnancy and STI prevention at YWRC. There I am able to talk to teenagers and adults that are true feminists about their thoughts on tons of different issues. They are still fighting for all equal rights in society. Thousands of people in this nation have been fighting for the past 120 years and are still going, just to have the same rights that are given to men.

If it were only 40 years ago girls my age would most likely be leaving school or graduating only to get married and have children shortly after. Then they would have a long life of taking care of children, cleaning the house and catering to their families every personal need and desires. That was a women’s job. It wasn’t even until World War I that women went into the work force, and it was only because a majority of the men were off at war. All these suffering and hard working women made it possible for girls just to be treated equally, but they don’t understand it. Anna said “your generation is scared of the word [Feminist]. They think lesbian or bra-burner.” My generation does not understand what a feminist actually is. They let the media take over their minds make them think they have to look a certain way, and act in a way that as a girl you should be clueless. When Snooki and J Wow go to clubs and bring back men, which are not proper examples of what a girl should aspire to be. Yet everyone follows what they see, even if they know it wrong because they feel like they have too. For Which is what raises this big question about feminism in my generation. Why is my generation of women throwing away their knowledge and self-respect in order to fit some image and a guy’s fantasy, especially the magnificent amount of work our fellow sisters have done for us to be treated equally?